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Party Platform

*This is a **tentative** version of the changes adopted on June 16, 2012. It has not yet been checked against the official minutes.*

Agriculture

The Montana Republican Party recognizes agriculture as a premier industry which creates new wealth in our state economy—as goes agriculture, so goes our Treasure State. The private ownership of property is a fundamental principle of our constitutional republic and government's only function is to secure such rights. We aggressively oppose government interference in, or regulatory control over agriculture beyond enumerated constitutional powers.

American Indian Affairs

The Montana Republican Party supports Native American tribes and their treaties with the Federal Government. We also support a continued economic relationship between the tribes and the State of Montana.

Business and Labor

Preamble

The Montana Republican Party believes in free market principals and the rights of employers and employees with a minimum of government interference and regulation.

Employment

We encourage all employers to hire Montanans. We believe that membership in labor bargaining units must remain free and flexible. We embrace the concept of multiple use and encourage responsible development and management of our renewable and nonrenewable natural resources industries by the private sector. We recognize the importance of new and existing Montana businesses as the source of economic growth in Montana. We support and encourage new capital investment in the Montana economy.

Worker's Compensation

We advocate a workers' compensation system that continues the reforms adopted by the sixty second Legislature

Government

We believe government programs should be restricted to those services which cannot be provided by the private sector. The role of government in economic development is to facilitate competitive

private sector growth. We oppose unfunded government mandates. We believe in transparency in government.

Regulations

We support Republican efforts to reduce the size of state government. We advocate all state administrative rules, regulations and statutes be assessed and, as appropriate, amended or repealed for the benefit of Montana. We support the active cooperation of government and our basic industries in exploring opportunities for the export of Montana products in the world market.

Tort Reform

Tort reform is an important issue in Montana that must be addressed.

Crime

General Principle

We support the concept of individual responsibility; that each person is solely responsible for his or her actions.

Truth in Sentencing

The public has a right to know, at the time of sentencing, the minimum amount of time a criminal will be incarcerated and under what conditions the criminal may be eligible for parole.

Lifetime Supervision for Convicted Sexual Offenders and Internet Predation

The Republican Party supports lifetime registration, monitoring, and supervision of convicted sexual offenders and timely notification to victims and local (city and county) law enforcement of the offender's pending release. We support the current laws that requires local law enforcement to be notified of the relocation of sexual offenders, and urge the local media to report these same facts. The information available to law enforcement will aggressively be disseminated to the public on the Attorney General's website and by other proactive means.

Cyber-crime and child pornography are growing menaces that the legislature should continue to investigate and deal with appropriately. We support new laws establishing a separate penalty against internet predators who communicate with a child online and then travel to meet that child for the specific purpose of further sexually abusing him or her, and to establish penalties for offenders who misrepresent their age to seduce a child over the internet.

School Safety

Every school must have the authority to expel, or otherwise discipline a student who brings a firearm or dangerous weapon into a school building or commits or incites others to commit an act of violence toward teachers and/or students. Every school also has the authority to expel, or otherwise discipline a student who brings illegal substances onto school property.

Youth Court

Youth Court should focus on responsibility and accountability through immediate, consistent, enforceable, and unavoidable consequences for those who violate the law. Juvenile offenders must be made aware that their actions will have consequences. In the case of juvenile offenses, custodial parents or guardians must be a part of the restitution and rehabilitation process.

Prison Reform

We support prison reform requiring appropriate work for inmates; the development of alternative community-based restorative justice programs and facilities for prisoners convicted of non-violent crime; and prison living conditions which are humane, safe and, secure but without amenities so as to discourage recidivism. Any new Department of Corrections facility must be approved by the voters of the community in which it is proposed.

Sexual Offense Victims

We believe that expenditures of state funds should prioritize restitution and treatment of victims of sexual offenses and their families before treatment for those who commit sexual offenses or who are accessories to sexual offenses.

Restitution

Criminals have an obligation to repay victims or victims' families for the cost of the crime. The restitution obligation should be addressed at sentencing and a portion of the offender's earnings should be applied to restitution.

Limit Appeals

We urge the federal government to expedite appeal(s) in death penalty cases and restrict frivolous lawsuits by inmates, recognizing that the costs are borne by the taxpayers of Montana.

Jury Authority

We reaffirm the principle espoused by our nation's founders that our court system belongs to the people, not the government. We recognize both the power and the moral obligation vested in juries to secure justice by judging both the facts of a case and application of the law itself. We support requiring judges to fully inform jurors of their constitutional rights and responsibilities.

Drugs and Alcohol

The legislature should continue its efforts to deal effectively with those who drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs. We recognize the danger that substance abuse poses to our society. We support stronger penalties for repeat offenders. We support alternatives and options to reduce recidivism.

Medical Use of Marijuana

We recognize that a significant problem exists with Montana's current laws regarding the medical use of marijuana and we support action by the next legislature to create a workable and realistic regulatory structure.

Parental Rights